

E-Newsletter – 2nd April 2021

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1) Information Corner

Revised Collection Dates – Easter Bank Holiday Weekend

Source: <https://www.southend.gov.uk/recycling-waste-0/collection-days-delivery-dates-getting-additional-sacks/2>

Friday 2nd April (good Friday) – collections will move to Saturday 3rd April

No change to collections week beginning Monday 5th April



The Southend Pass is now available to buy, via the new Southend Parking app, and you can start using it from 1 April.

The app is available on both Android and iOS.

Visit the App Store for the iOS version

Visit Google Play for the Android version

What does the pass cover?

For £8.50 per month, you can park for up to 3 hours at a time, in council-operated car parks and on-street parking bays across the borough (from Leigh-on-Sea to Shoeburyness).

This pass can be used for parking from 1 April 2021.

The Southend Pass will be available for everyone to buy, even those who live outside the borough, so please do tell your friends so they can enjoy cheap parking in our shopping districts, near our parks and across the whole seafront.

As the world begins to open up, we hope the pass gives you peace of mind that you can just park and go and enjoy those things we have been missing for so long.

For full details, FAQ's and terms and conditions of the Southend Pass, please visit www.southend.gov.uk/southendpass.

For more information on our four new parking zones from 1 April 2021, please visit <https://www.southend.gov.uk/car-parks-1/parking-charges-1st-april-2021/1>

Southend getting ready to reopen and welcome back visitors safely

A multi-faceted plan has been put in place to ensure the Borough is fully prepared and ready to welcome back visitors and keep residents safe as national restrictions ease as part of the government's roadmap out of lockdown.

Led by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and developed with the local stakeholder group that includes traders, Leigh Town Council, Southend BID and Southend Tourism Partnership, plans and resources will focus on town centre, open spaces, seafront and beaches.

In line with the government's timeline for easing out of lockdown, plans for Southend include:

- Extra resources being deployed from 29 March for the peak season including toilet attendants at key locations, additional cleaning staff for open spaces, beach combers and evening cleaning.
- Extra medical support will be in place over Easter Weekend and other key dates
- Additional larger 'EuroBins' will be put in place in seafront locations
- Additional litter picking and bin emptying will take place in our main parks at weekends and during the school holidays, with four staff based at Belfairs Park, Priory Park, Chalkwell Park and Southchurch Park from 11:30am to 7:30pm.
- Additional litter picking and bin emptying will also take place at Thorpe Bay Gardens, Shoebury Common, Leigh Cliffs and Marine Parade/Belton Hills (in addition to Southend Cliffs, Prittlewell Square, Warrior Square Gardens. Two extra mobile litter pickers will support other areas

- Additional temporary toilets will be installed in Old Leigh, City Beach, Shorefields, Darlows Green
- Additional toilet cleaning will take place at weekends and school holiday at Belfairs Park, Priory Park and Southchurch Park
- Additional hand sanitizer stations
- From 12 April, six extra seasonal foreshore staff will be in place to accommodate expected higher demand and providing first aid, information, advice and guidance. They will be located at Jubilee Beach (first aid base), Shoebury Common Slipway, Two Tree Island and Old Leigh. The Jubilee Beach office will be open for extended hours.

Reopening businesses safely

The Council is also engaging with businesses and stakeholders offering advice and considerations about reopening safely and responsibly. Guidance includes how to run a COVID-secure establishment such as risk assessments, use of face coverings, social distancing, one-way systems, number restrictions, use of electronic payment, pre-booking and test and trace information. A dedicated regulatory service email to provide advice for businesses who may have positive test results in their workforce is also in place.

The safety advisory group (SAG) will also be working with event organisers to design COVID-secure events and liaise with them on any event applications.

A team of four compliance ambassadors will continue work in the community and visit premises to check compliance and signpost to guidance. Ambassadors will always look to engage with non-compliant premises in the first instance with enforcement being the last resort.

Jacqui Dallimore, Managing Director, Roslin Beach Hotel and Chairman of the Southend Tourism Partnership, said:

“Last year saw the Southend Tourism Partnership launch Southend Safe, a scheme designed to help the hospitality and leisure sector operate safely as they began to reopen. So we have experience of this process and of what is required. Partnership members and the council have been working closely throughout the pandemic and I am very hopeful that we can confidently and safely encourage and re-welcome visitors back to the town, local residents out to our venues, and help our businesses get back on track. To our customers old and new, we have missed you and are looking forward to seeing you again soon, safely.”

Community safety

In addition to our security base at Jubilee Beach, a new frontline security base in Old Leigh is now operational and is located inside the Leigh Heritage Centre. This will be used by our community safety officers (CSOs). Other council departments and partners including the police will also be invited to use the base to enhance the overall visible presence in the area.

An extra officer will be deployed to monitor our CCTV suite at weekends with a particular focus on the seafront.

The community safety team will also be gathering specific seafront data and insights to help prioritise our resources and inform our partnership work with the police.

Carl Robinson, Director of Public Protection, said: "Public safety is of paramount importance and, working closely with the police and other community partners, we will provide a greater security presence. Our team of CSOs will provide a patrolling presence and seek to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime by providing reassurance, assistance and help to create a safer, more pleasant environment."

Parking

All car parks will be open from 29 March and parking suspensions lifted apart from a small number that are in place to support social distancing for businesses in pinch point areas. New parking fees come into effect on 1 April and all car parks and on-street parking will be chargeable. Enforcement of all restrictions borough-wide will resume on 29 March 2021; this will include the 1-hour restrictions in residential areas.

Additional car park security will be in place at all key seafront car parks to help ensure traffic flow if they become busy and direct drivers to other car parks if necessary. Visit our website for more information on car parking charges and the Southend Pass.

Communications and signage

Enhanced signage and messages developed by Southend BID and the council will be in place to encourage residents and visitors to demonstrate safe and respectful behaviour. This will include encouraging everyone to take more responsibility for their waste and rather than leave rubbish next to a full bin, find an alternative bin or take it home.

There will be further messaging to #StaySafeStayApart and #StaySafeSouthend which will focus on the basic public health measures that everyone needs to follow such as Hands, Face and Space.

Scott Dolling, Director of Culture and Tourism, said: "Normally Southend-on-Sea welcomes over 7 million visitors in a year and contributes over £350m to the local economy, supporting thousands of jobs but the past year has been exceptionally challenging for our hospitality and accommodation sector - arts, culture, events and more.

"As lockdown eases over the coming weeks and months, we want Southend to bounce back as we reopen and welcome visitors back so our businesses, that rely heavily on tourism, can thrive and get the economy moving.

"As part of Southend's roadmap to recovery, we have worked very closely with businesses, voluntary/community organisations and event organisers, to address the Council's economic recovery priorities, and to listen to ideas for improving economic prospects in the wake of the pandemic."

Krishna Ramkhelawon, director of public health for Southend-on-Sea said: “We fully expect the numbers of people travelling into Southend this summer for a staycation to be higher than ever before.

“We also know that Southend reopening and welcoming back visitors will be a cause for concern for many. Fighting coronavirus and keeping our residents’ safe is a priority for us and will be the driving factor behind any decisions we take.

“At this time last year, COVID-19 was new to the world and many were taken by surprise. But now we have experience of living with the virus and our collaborative approach with the police, business and other partners will ensure Southend is ready and prepared as we move out of lockdown.

“After consultation with local businesses and stakeholders, we are opening a new COVID LFD rapid testing site for people with no symptoms. Located on the seafront opposite the pier entrance, anyone can walk in and get tested without an appointment. This is ideally located for seafront businesses and their staff to get tested as well as visitors.

“Encouraging people to visit Southend must not be at the expense of people’s health. Our communities should feel reassured that the huge amount of planning already underway should allow people to travel into Southend and enjoy what the borough has to offer, while keeping both residents and visitors safe.

“Please continue to follow the rules in place, and if meeting outdoors from 29 March, please stay safe and stay two metres apart from those you don’t live with.”

Scams

We have been contacted by a member who received a scam text regarding her census declaration at 2 am on 25th March. The text said that there was some invalid information and to submit it again and they gave an address. It also said that the member may be liable for a £200 fine so she contacted the Census telephone help line and they confirmed the number the message came from was a scam.

Please be aware.

2) Temporary Road Closures

a) Western Road, Leigh-On-Sea – Emergency Sewer Repairs – 29th March for 1 week

To facilitate emergency sewer repairs; they have imposed a prohibition of traffic in Western Road, Leigh-On-Sea.

All vehicles will be prohibited from:

PROCEEDING INTO WESTERN ROAD FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH VERON ROAD AND THEOBALDS ROAD.

These prohibitions or restrictions came into effect on **29th March 2021**. It is anticipated that the works will last for **1 week**.

Whilst this section of Western Road is closed, an alternative route for traffic will be marked on site and resident's access will be maintained where possible.

b) Hadleigh Road, Leigh-On-Sea – Essential carriageway works – 7th April for 2 days

To facilitate essential carriageway works, they have imposed a TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF WAITING, LOADING AND UNLOADING IN HADLEIGH ROAD LEIGH-ON-SEA.

All vehicles will be prohibited from Waiting, Loading and Unloading in Hadleigh Road at the following locations:

Southbound from Nos 218/216 to 206/St Michaels School

Northbound from 213, 215/217, 219 to 235/237

Southbound from 174,172 to 160/158

Northbound from 165/167 to 177/179

Southbound from 158/156 to the junction with Burnham Road

Northbound from the junction with Burnham Road to 159/161

Southbound from the junction with Burnham Road 140/138

Northbound from its junction with Western Road to its junction with Burnham Road

Southbound from its junction with Glendale Gardens to 104/100

Northbound from 117/121 to its junction with Salisbury Road (access maintained for bus stop)

Southbound from its junction with Grange Road to 76/70

Northbound from 95/97 to 105/107

Southbound from 68/66 to 56/54

Northbound from its junction with Marine Parade to the garages/Memory House Car Park

These prohibitions will come into effect from **7th April for 2 days**. This notice will remain in force for 5 days (excluding the weekend) to allow for unexpected events/delays and possible remedial works or where appropriate signs are showing and weather permitting, emergency services access and resident access will be maintained where possible.

3) A127 Major Works (A127 & the Bell Junction)

A127 Bell Junction - 29th Mar to 5th Apr

Mon-Tues (excluding bank holiday weekend) there will be northbound full-time lane closures on Hopleythick Lane, and Wed-Thur there will be northbound daytime off-

peak (09:00 to 15:00) lane closures for the construction of the new pedestrian crossing island.

Mon-Tuesday (including bank holiday weekend) there will be full-time southbound lane closures on Rochford Road, for the construction of the new bus layby.

Mon-Fri (excluding bank holiday weekend) there will be eastbound and westbound off-peak (09:00 to 15:00) lane closures on the A127 (at the Bell Junction), for new carriageway widening and footway works.

The A127 eastbound right hand turn lane into Hopleythick Lane will also be closed until the end of April, to allow new kerbs to be laid and the realignment of the eastbound central reserve. Traffic will be diverted to the Cuckoo Corner Roundabout Junction during this time.

A127 Essential Major Maintenance - 29th Mar to 30th Mar

Mon-Tues there will be an eastbound night-time (20:00 to 06:30) road closure from the Progress Road junction to the Kent Elms Junction, for resurfacing of the failed section of carriageway adjacent to the speed camera location.

4) Weekly Works

Address 1	Start	End	Works Reference	L.A.Ref	Traffic Management
FULFORD DRIVE	08/03/2021	31/03/2021	AZ007-1000891719	103514	Some carriageway incursion – delays unlikely (T.M Change)
THORPE HALL AVENUE	13/01/2021	31/03/2021	AZ007-1000994632	111886	Some carriageway incursion – delays unlikely (T.M change)
GROVEWOOD AVENUE	16/03/2021	05/05/2021	AZ007-1001014529	113153	Road closure - delays likely
SALISBURY AVENUE	29/03/2021	02/04/2021	BC008-29MARWC1H1W5V	113500	Road closure – delays likely
ALBANY AVENUE	29/03/2021	02/04/2021	BC008-MAR29WC1H1W5V	113501	Some carriageway incursion – delays unlikely
WESTERN ESPLANADE	02/04/2020	01/04/2022	JR001-TEMPDIST2825	106534	Some carriageway incursion – delays unlikely

GROVEWOOD AVENUE	04/12/2020	14/04/2021	JR101-TEMPDIST2988	113064	No carriageway incursion – delays unlikely
BISHOPSTEIGNTON	18/03/2021	20/04/2021	KG027-SE-FTTH-PN014-14	114575	Give & take – delays possible (T.M change)

5) List of Applications Registered **Week Ending 1st April 2021**

Application Number: 21/00592/FULH

Ward: Southchurch

Officer: Oliver Hart

Erect part single/part two storey rear extension, install dormer window to rear, alter elevations

3 Ladram Way Thorpe Bay Essex

Application Number: 21/00578/FUL

Ward: Thorpe

Officer: Scott Davison

Replace existing beach hut

Beach Hut 61 Thorpe Esplanade Thorpe Bay

6) List of Decisions Issued **Week Ending 28th March 2021**

APPLN. NO: 21/00143/FULH

Ward. Southchurch

Officer: Julie Ramsey

ERECT TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION

125 BROADCLYST GARDENS THORPE BAY ESSEX

Decision: Refuse Permission

APPLN. NO: 21/00164/FULH

Ward. Southchurch

Officer: Kara Elliott

ERECT SINGLE STOREY REAR/SIDE EXTENSION WITH ROOF LANTERN,
EXTEND EXISTING GARAGE TO FRONT AND CONVERT REAR SECTION INTO
HABITABLE ACCOMMODATION

282 THORPE HALL AVENUE THORPE BAY ESSEX

Decision: Grant Conditional Permission

APPLN. NO: 21/00167/AMDT

Ward. Thorpe

Officer: Robert Lilburn

APPLICATION TO VARY CONDITON 3 TO CHANGE OPENING HOURS FROM
MONDAYSUNDAY 08:00 TO 18:00 TO MONDAY-SUNDAY 08:00 TO 21:00

(MINOR MATERIAL AMENDMENT TO APPLICATION 20/02017/PA3COU DATED 26/01/2021)

199 EASTERN ESPLANADE SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ESSEX

Decision: Grant Conditional Permission

APPLN. NO: 21/00230/CLP

Ward. Thorpe

Officer: Kara Elliott

ERECT DORMER TO REAR WITH JULIETTE BALCONY TO FORM HABITABLE ACCOMMODATION IN THE LOFTSPACE, INSTALL ROOFLIGHTS TO FRONT (CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT - PROPOSED)

17 PLAS NEWYDD THORPE BAY ESSEX

Decision: Grant Lawful Dev Certificate (Proposed)

APPLN. NO: 21/00246/FUL

Ward. Thorpe

Officer: Oliver Hart

REPLACE EXISTING BEACH HUT BEACH HUT

159 THORPE ESPLANADE THORPE BAY

Decision: Grant Conditional Permission

APPLN. NO: 21/00131/AD

Ward. West Shoebury

Officer: Robert Lilburn

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF DETAILS PURSUANT TO CONDITIONS 03 (DETAILS OF MATERIALS), 17 (DETAILS OF DEVELOPMENT LEVELS) AND 19 (DETAILS OF HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING) OF PLANNING PERMISSION 20/01884/AMDT DATED 13.01.2021

14 LODWICK SHOEBURYNESSE SOUTHEND-ON-SEA

Decision: Grant Permission

APPLN. NO: 21/00190/FULH

Ward. West Shoebury

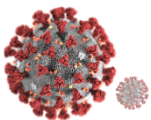
Officer: Kara Elliott

ERECT SINGLE STOREY SIDE/FRONT EXTENSION WITH PORCH TO FRONT AND ALTER REAR ELEVATION

122 MAPLIN WAY THORPE BAY ESSEX

Decision: Refuse Permission

7) Coronavirus Information



Over-70s to get boost vaccines from September

People aged over 70 are due to get booster coronavirus vaccines from September to protect them from new virus variants. Vaccines minister Nadhim Zahawi said some people will have three doses within the first 10 months of the jabs being in use, with the over-70s, health and social care staff and the clinically vulnerable the first to receive them.

Infection levels rise among secondary school children in England

COVID-19 infection levels have risen slightly among secondary school-age children in England in the second week that pupils were back in classrooms, figures from the Office for National Statistics show. For school years 7 to 11, in the week up to 20 March, 0.43 per cent of children on average tested positive for coronavirus, up from 0.32 per cent the week before.

Few people with coronavirus symptoms are self-isolating, study finds

A study of the test and trace system has found that fewer than one in five people request a COVID-19 test if they have symptoms, while the number who follow full self-isolation rules is as low as 43 per cent. The report, published in the British Medical Journal, also found that only half of people knew the main coronavirus symptoms. Cllr Paulette Hamilton, Vice Chair of the LGA's Community Wellbeing Board, said the findings of the latest study were "concerning". She said it was "critical that everyone does the right thing and self-isolates when required. Key to this is making sure people understand what self-isolation means, feel able to comply and are supported to do so if necessary."

Second vaccine doses outnumber first jabs for first time in single day

The number of second doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered in the UK in a single day has exceeded first doses for the first time. A total of 270,526 second doses were registered on Tuesday, compared with 224,590 first jabs, according to the latest government figures. The total number of first doses given so far is almost 31 million.

Bin the litter louts

Clean Up Britain is calling for tougher fines for litter louts as the volume of litter increases in parks and open spaces amid the easing of lockdown rules. Fly-tipping and littering costs councils £58 million a year to clear up.

Weekly Briefing on Local Decisions & Actions re Coronavirus outbreak 26th March 2021

Key updates/actions

Vaccination: With the vaccination roll-out underway, regular information is being updated on the EPUT website and the dedicated Essex COVID vaccine website. Figures are now also being reported by the national programme on a STP/ICS footprint – the latest weekly figures can be found at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-vaccinations/>.

Analysis carried out by Public Health England suggests that the COVID-19 vaccination programme prevented 6,100 deaths in England up to the end of February 2021. Read more on GOV.UK

Local Outbreak Management Plan: This is an update to the Local Outbreak Control Plan which was set out in June 2020. The Local Outbreak Management Plan sets

out the arrangements for ongoing local surveillance and the actions that will be taken in response to local outbreaks if and when they happen. The Local Outbreak Control Plan is primarily about controlling outbreaks. However, preventing spread of the virus is still critically important to prevent localised outbreaks. The full document can be viewed directly on our website. The full set of documents are on our Local COVID document page.

Southend getting ready for reopening: A multi-faceted plan has been put in place to ensure the Borough is fully prepared and ready to welcome back visitors and keep residents safe as national restrictions ease.

Shielding: More than 3.79 million clinically extremely vulnerable people in England will be informed they are no longer advised to shield from Thursday 1 April 2021. Read more on GOV.UK.

COVID-19 testing: Testing is key to stop the spread and identify cases.

Testing options includes three rapid testing LFD sites available across the Borough.

Full details of all the booking options are available at www.southend.gov.uk/gettested

Business grants: New Government business grants in place from November lockdown: 6,444 grant payments totalling £14.17m with 488 outstanding out of 4,930 applications received.

Discretionary grants: Paid £1.941m to 611 businesses

Small business and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grants: Paid c. £37.5m to 3,086 businesses

Coronavirus case data: This is published on our website and now also includes the daily 7 day rate of positive cases per 100,000.

7-day rate of positive cases as of 26 March 2021 is 33.9 per 100,000 (down from 41 per 100,000 on 19 March). The rate in the 60 and over age bracket is 19.8. per 100,000 (down from 28.6 per 100,000 on 19 March).

ONS death data: Southend-on-Sea residents' deaths registered inside and outside of Southend-on-Sea with any mention of COVID-19 on the death certificate that occurred up to 12 March but were registered up to 20 March 2021: 650 (+9).

National and local data: A link to the national NHS Digital information shows information by time intervals (for example, 3-days, 7-days, 30-days, etc), as well as the total numbers and requests or referrals to NHS 111.

Other

· Members of the public who need to self-isolate but are stuck and have no local support from friends and family can call the helpline on 01702 212497. A full list of support contact numbers is available on the corporate website

Out of hours:

Urgent issues arising out of hours should be reported to the out of hours service in accordance with standard practice.

The phone number is 01702 215000.

The out of hours service will then contact the relevant Council officer who is on-call or the relevant contractor such as Veolia. They also have access to the town link radio and CCTV.

Weekly Briefing on Local Decisions & Actions re Coronavirus outbreak 1st April 2021

Key updates/actions

Vaccination: With the vaccination roll-out underway, regular information is being updated on the EPUT website and the dedicated Essex COVID vaccine website. Figures are now also being reported by the national programme on a STP/ICS footprint – the latest weekly figures can be found at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-vaccinations/>.

New vaccine advice for adults living with adults who are immunosuppressed: JCVI recommends that adults living with adults who are immunosuppressed should be prioritised for the COVID-19 vaccine. Read more on GOV.UK

COVID-19 testing: Testing options includes four rapid testing LFD sites available across the Borough, including a new site on the central seafront in Unit 21. These sites will be open as usual over Easter weekend, although the St Aidan's site will open at Midday on Easter Sunday.

Full details of all the booking options are available at www.southend.gov.uk/gettested. Testing is key to stop the spread and identify cases.

Government reintroduces confirmatory PCR testing for assisted testing: Read more on GOV.UK

Local Outbreak Management Plan: This is an update to the Local Outbreak Control Plan which was set out in June 2020. The Local Outbreak Management Plan sets out the arrangements for ongoing local surveillance and the actions that will be taken in response to local outbreaks if and when they happen. The Local Outbreak Control Plan is primarily about controlling outbreaks. However, preventing spread of the virus is still critically important to prevent localised outbreaks. The full document can be viewed directly on our website. The full set of documents are on our Local COVID document page.

Leisure centre reopening: Members of Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre can now attend outdoor fitness sessions in groups of six as Fusion Lifestyle began their reopening plan this week, in line with the Government's roadmap.

Business grants: New Government business grants in place from November lockdown: 6,688 grant payments totalling £14.86m with 480 outstanding out of 4,996 applications received.

Discretionary grants: Paid £1.941m to 611 businesses

Small business and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grants: Paid c. £37.5m to 3,086 businesses

Coronavirus case data: This is published on our website and now also includes the daily 7 day rate of positive cases per 100,000.

7-day rate of positive cases as of 1 April 2021 is 35.5 per 100,000 (slightly up from 33.9 per 100,000 on 26 March). The rate in the 60 and over age bracket is 19.8 per 100,000 (same as 26 March).

ONS death data: Southend-on-Sea residents' deaths registered inside and outside of Southend-on-Sea with any mention of COVID-19 on the death certificate that occurred up to 19 March but were registered up to 27 March 2021: 662 (+12).

National and local data: A link to the national NHS Digital information shows information by time intervals (for example, 3-days, 7-days, 30-days, etc), as well as the total numbers and requests or referrals to NHS 111.

Other

- A full list of support contact numbers is available on the corporate website
- **Stay Well this Easter:** Local NHS partners have published a guide to health services over the Easter weekend. Download it from the MSE website.

Out of hours:

Urgent issues arising out of hours should be reported to the out of hours service in accordance with standard practice.

The phone number is 01702 215000.

The out of hours service will then contact the relevant Council officer who is on-call or the relevant contractor such as Veolia. They also have access to the town link radio and CCTV.

Summary of Covid-19 related Government announcements 26th March 2021

DoHSC

- Announced additional £12.9m per month for council to support people being asked to self-isolate
- Published study which found 99% of people generate immune response after one dose of Pfizer vaccine
- R number and Growth rate, is between 0.7 and 0.9

DoSC and Home Office

Confirmed vaccine will be available to everyone living in the UK free, regardless of immigration status and no immigration checks will be carried out. No personal information will be shared outside the NHS.

PHE

- Published weekly national flu and COVID surveillance report. Case rates remained stable between 15 and 21 March, rates increased across age range 5 – 19 and had fallen in all other age groups.
- Released Lateral Flow Test video explainer in 12 languages and British Sign Language

MHCLG

- Announced guidance for safe use of government buildings following confirmation that emergency legislation regarding virtual council buildings will end on 7 May. MHCLG are also call for evidence from councils on use of current arrangements to hold meetings remotely. A Letter to council leaders was also released from Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government

Secretary of State Robert Jenrick MP published written Ministerial Statement to Parliament on measures to support businesses to reopen, operate safely and recover:

- Continuing current temporary extensions to construction working hours until 30 September
- Encouraging councils take flexible approach to planning enforcement so retailers can extend opening hours
- Extending current flexible approach to planning enforcement to allow retailers of food and essential items to increase delivery frequency
- Encourage councils work in supporting social distancing measures on high streets

DfE

- Guidance on how staff in early years setting can access rapid coronavirus testing
- Updated guidance on remote education good practice guidance.

The Insolvency Service

- Announced extension of temporary insolvency measures providing businesses support. Measures will be extended until the end of June 2021
- Statutory demands and winding-up petition will continue to be restricted to protect companies from creditor enforced action
- Small suppliers will not have to continue supply a business in insolvency

Entry to moratorium will remain relaxed and entry will be subject to insolvency procedure

Summary of Covid-19 related Government announcements 27th – 29th March 2021

Downing Street

The PM led today's COVID-19 press conference, with England's CMO Chris Whitty and CSO Patrick Vallance. Key points include:

- Today being a 'big day', as the first opportunity to meet others outdoors. Groups of 6, or 2 households, can now meet outside.
- Vaccinating elderly and most vulnerable has driven down hospitalisations. Public are encouraged to take up second doses.
- Long-term UK vaccine manufacturing capabilities are being built up to provide 50-60m vaccines. Novavax will be produced at Fujifilm, and GlaxoSmithKline will finish and bottle vaccines in the North East.
- The PM encourages the public to take up exercise and build resilience.
- The PM urges caution, and reminds the public of Hands, Face, Space, and Fresh Air.
- Hospitalisations and deaths in the UK continue to fall.
- Updates on travel abroad will be announced from April 5.

DOHSC

- In a press release, the public are reminded they must stay outside when meeting others.
- In a press release, a New Office for Health Promotion will drive improvement of the nation's health, by tackling obesity, improving mental health and promoting physical activity.
- In a press release, more than 30m people in the UK have received first doses as the NHS prepares to administer second doses in the coming weeks.
- In a press release, all employers can offer their employees free, rapid and regular testing that can be taken at home.
- Test and Trace guidance reflects the change in rules for when a group enters a venue. From 29 March, every customer or visitor should be asked to scan the NHS QR code or provide their name and contact details, not just a lead member.

PHE

- In a press release, the JCVI recommends that adults living with adults who are immunosuppressed should be prioritised for the COVID-19 vaccine.
- o A response letter from Matt Hancock to the JCVI is also published.

DfE

- In a press release, Ofsted will not return to a full programme of graded inspections until September. Ofsted will inspect schools and FES providers this summer term to provide reassurance about how well learners are catching up.
 - o The OFSTED rolling update reflects this change.
- Guidance for Early Years and childcare providers includes updated information on shielding, asymptomatic testing, Test and Trace payments for parents, parent and child groups: singing, educational visits and resuming Ofsted visits.

DfT

- Guidance on jobs that qualify for travel exemptions is updated to reflect new testing regimes for UK inbound passengers coming into force on 6 April.

MHCLG

- Weddings and civil partnership ceremonies are no longer limited to exceptional circumstances. Receptions and celebrations are still not permitted, but small gatherings can take place in line with social contact limits.

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

- In a press release, seasonal workers are to receive free Covid-19 tests on farms.
 - o A letter to the agricultural sector on workplace testing is also published.

Summary of Covid-19 related Government announcements 30th March 2021

Please see below the latest government announcements relating to COVID-19:

DoHSC

- Announcement reintroducing confirmatory PCR testing, to validate initial rapid test and as the test will allow detection of maximum number of cases with variants
- Announced £2.4m fund for disability charities to provide practical support to children with disabilities, set up helplines and provision of mental health and wellbeing support
- Surge testing updated to include Bolton Council and London Boroughs of Wandsworth and Southwark
- Guidance published for Adult Social Care Infection Control and Testing Fund of £341m to support distribution of funds, conditions of funds and reporting requirements
- Press release, Sir Lenny Henry has written a letter to Black Britons to take vaccine
- Updated face covering guidance to reflect restriction changes after 29 March
- Statement from Health Minister on Designated Setting Indemnity Support scheme extended until the 30 June

PHE

- Updated guidance for households with possible coronavirus to include reinforced guidance for those who have been fully vaccinated and guidance related to follow up PCR for positive assisted LFD test

DfE and Ofqual

- Guidance detailing summer school programme for secondary schools including funding, requirements for running a summer school and best practice evidence
- Announced Data Sharing Advisory Committee including representatives from Ofqual, Ofsted, UCAS and DfE to provide independent steer to the Project Board
- DfE is asking councils to continue communicating importance of testing over Easter
- Updated guidance for schools on Test and Trace support payments, expectations for clinically extremely vulnerable pupils, educational visits, wraparound provision and extra-curricular activities, physical activity in school and inspections and Yr11 to 13 exam cohort attendance and provision for summer term

Office of National Statistics

- Published experimental estimates to understand the business impact of locals and national restrictions

DfT

- Announced guidance for the fourth batch 'Fix your bike' voucher scheme

Summary of Covid-19 related Government announcements 31st March 2021

From 1 April, clinically extremely vulnerable people in England will no longer be advised to shield

DHSC has updated guidance for how people can gain help with daily activities outdoors, and includes information on:

- getting around in unfamiliar settings
- communicating with others
- going shopping
- exercising

Guidance has been updated

- on working safely with additional information on ventilation, and tests.

- Specific updates have also been made to test and trace requirements for hospitality, tourism, leisure, and close contact services.
- There are also updates regarding operating fitting rooms safely for shops and branches.
- for owners and operators on safer public spaces

DfE has updated guidance on transport to school to reflect the announcement that a confirmatory Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test is now required following a positive Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test result in England.

New planning laws have been announced to **support high streets**:

- A new fast track for extending public service buildings including schools, colleges, universities and hospitals
- An amendment of existing permitted development rights for ports, so that they have the same freedoms as airports for undertaking development
- Amendments to the demolition permitted development right, to ensure the removal of unlisted heritage assets is subject to due process and proper consultation

The **Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities** has published a report into racial and ethnic disparities in the UK. The report makes 24 recommendations which are grouped into four broad themes:

- build trust
- promote fairness
- create agency
- achieve inclusivity

This includes the recommendation to establish The Office for Health Disparities which the report recommends would work alongside existing local health workers and utilise best practice examples from councils and public health regional offices.

Summary of Covid-19 related Government announcements 1st April 2021

Natural England

- Natural England has launched a new Countryside Code to help people enjoy countryside in a safe and respectful way.
 - o Defra and Natural England have also created a partner toolkit for councils to use in their local communications. Councils are encouraged to adapt these materials to suit their own needs.

DfE

- A new grant is announced to support approved exam centres with meeting the costs of providing assessment for private candidates this year.

- o Approved exam centres will receive £200 per private entry to ensure that candidates can access a centre at a similar cost to a normal exam year.
- o The JCQ published a list of centres that are willing to support private candidates, including home educated students and adult learners, to access GCSE, AS, and A level grades this year.
- o Private candidates are encouraged to use this list to find a centre and make arrangements before the entry deadline of 26 April.

NHS

- A letter to the health sector is published on the next steps for the vaccination of adult household contacts of severely immunosuppressed people.
- o The letter encourages GP practices to inform severely immunosuppressed adults that their household contacts are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.
- o It reiterates that, over the next few weeks, the health sector should focus on ensuring individuals in JCVI priority cohorts 1-9 are protected, before moving on to vaccinate cohort 10.
- NHS England has launched the COVID-19 Vaccine Equalities Connect and Exchange Hub, aimed at anyone working on improving vaccine uptake.
- o The Hub supports people to connect and exchange ideas on increasing vaccine uptake and can be used to find the latest evidence and resources; Connect and collaborate with colleagues; Share ideas; Join a series of lunch and learns;
- o To join, please register for a Future NHS account. Once registered you can then request to join the Hub. Request an account and join the Hub: <https://future.nhs.uk/>

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

- A £5 bn Restart Grants Scheme is announced today, providing funding to eligible businesses through councils. Full guidance is available.
- o Businesses in the non-essential retail sector in England will be eligible for one-off grants of up to £6,000, while businesses in the hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym sectors, which are reopening later, will be eligible for one-off grants of up to £18,000.
- o Yesterday a letter thanked council chief executives for supporting businesses over the last 12 months. The letter also encourages councils to ensure businesses in their area receive the new grants as soon as possible.

MHCLG

- A summary of responses and the government response is published, to the technical consultation on how to implement the new model for Shared Ownership.

MHCLG has also published the government's response to the proposals on securing First Homes.

- The PM has appointed Sara Khan as the government's Independent Adviser for Social Cohesion and Resilience, as part of Government efforts to tackle extremism in local communities.

- o Sara will work with frontline experts to understand the negative impact of extremism in local communities and develop recommendations on how to better support and protect victims of extremism, and those working to eradicate it, as well as communities that are affected.

EU Transition Support for Businesses

- Webinars and videos about EU trading are available for councils to share with local stakeholders and businesses.

- o A full calendar of webinars for organisations that trade with the EU can be found on GOV.UK. Live webinars taking place next week include 'HMRC Exporting: what you need to do keep your goods moving' and 'HMRC Importing: what you need to know about Staged Controls'.

- Businesses can also use the Brexit Checker tool on GOV.UK, which will provide a personalised list of the most up to date actions that businesses need to take.

- The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has helplines to assist UK businesses with enquiries related to the end of the Transition Period.

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